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Introduction

Peace and My World contains a captivating whole language, thematic unit. Its exciting pages are filled with a wide variety of lesson ideas and reproducible pages designed for use with primary children. The activities are based on high-quality children's literature selections which set the stage for reading, encourage the enjoyment of each book, and extend the concepts gained. In addition, the theme is connected to the curriculum with activities in language arts, maths, science, social studies, art, music, and life skills. Many of these activities encourage co-operative learning. Suggestions and patterns for display boards and unit management tools are additional time savers for the busy teacher. Furthermore, directions for student-created Big Books and a culminating activity, both of which allow students to synthesize their knowledge in order to produce products that can be shared beyond the classroom, highlight this very complete teacher resource.

This thematic unit includes:

- literature selections**—summaries of children's books with related lessons (complete with reproducible pages) that cross the curriculum.
- poetry**—suggested selections and lessons enabling students to write and publish their own works.
- planning guides**—suggestions for sequencing lessons each day of the unit.
- writing ideas**—suggestions for sequencing lessons each day of the unit.
- writing ideas**—daily suggestions as well as writing activities across the curriculum.
- display board ideas**—suggestions and plans for student-created and/or interactive display boards.
- homework suggestions**—extending the unit to the child's home.
- curriculum connections**—in language arts, maths, science, social studies, art, music, and life skills.
- group projects**—to foster co-operative learning
- culminating activity**—which requires students to synthesize their learning to produce a product or engage in an activity that can be shared with others.
- bibliography**—suggesting additional literature and nonfiction books on the theme.

Peace Begins with You

by Katherine Scholes

(Available in Australia from Penguin)

Summary

This book begins with personal needs and wants. It then increases the scope beyond the individual to include the appreciation of diversity, such as living alone versus living with others. It also names skills needed in living peacefully—listening to each other, problem-solving, co-operating, mediating problems, alternative-setting, and decision-making. The book then moves into a discussion of conflict as a possible beginning of understanding. Nations and groups can also find themselves in need of mediation. Peacemakers are mentioned as hard workers because peacemaking is much harder than fighting.

This is a book children enjoy, but they do need teacher assistance to pull apart and examine the different aspects of peace that are available to them, and to practise those skills.

Sample Plan

Day 1

- Do Peace and Nature. (page 6)
- Begin reading *Peace Begins with You*.

Day 2

- Finish *Peace Begins with You*.
- Put up display board. Use daily for opening.
- Make Peace Journal entry. (page 22)
- Make Mandalas. (page 42)
- Construct the Validation Station. (page 17)

Day 3

- Continue display board opening.
- Explain validation station; write two validations.
- Share several peaceful “cuts” from audiotapes.
- Role play peace roles. (page 7)
- Record results on writing activity.
- Make Peace Journal entry. (page 22)

Day 4

- Continue display board opening.
- Write three validations.
- Share several peaceful selections.
- Conduct a peace interview. (page 11)

Day 5

- Continue display board opening.
- Share peaceful musical selections.
- Write two validations.
- Brainstorm for Peace Web. (page 8)
- Continue Peace/War articles chart follow-up in daily writing.
- Write a sequel to *Peace Begins with You*. (page 12)

Overview of Activities

Setting the Stage

1. Begin a display board on the theme of "Peace".
2. Do "Peace and Nature" (page 6) before reading *Peace Begins with You* or *The Big Book for Peace*. Save this work. After finishing the unit, ask children to re-evaluate their answers. Does peace mean the same thing to all of them?
3. Put the Peace Journal together. See directions on page 22. This may be done as a whole group project. Add blank paper for children to record their thoughts throughout the unit.
4. Decorate the envelopes that will be used for the Validation Station. Provide one envelope per child. Make sure that children put their first names on their envelopes. See page 17.
5. Prepare paper for mandala art. See page 42.

Enjoying the Book

1. Show the students the cover of *Peace Begins with You* and ask for their thoughts. Ask them how peace begins with them. Place their thoughts on a chart and save. You will add to the chart throughout the week.
2. Make a second chart. Ask students to discuss things they can control in their own lives. Place those named on a chart and save. Once again, you will be adding to the chart throughout the week.
3. Begin by reading the book straight through. Let the children listen and enjoy the story.
4. After you have read the story through, follow the procedure outlined below. This will give the children time to reflect on the book.
 - Begin by reading again, this time stopping after "...having the things you need." Ask students to name some things they need. Read on until "...at least some of the things you want." Stop there and ask students to name some things they want, but that they could live without.
 - Read on until "...allowed to be different." Ask students to tell you how being allowed to be different happens. How do people know when they are allowed to be different?

- Read on until "...conflict as a beginning." Ask how conflict can be the beginning for students when they disagree on the playground.
 - Read on until "...choices." Ask how the choices we make can affect those around us.
 - Read on until "...peace with the land." Ask students how we do that today, and how we could be even better at it tomorrow. Why is living with the earth so important to all of us?
5. Re-read the book again urging students to think back to the points that they brought up during class discussions. This re-reading opportunity will give students a chance to hear some things they may have missed before.

Extending the Book

1. Begin the "Sounds of Peace" song search. See page 10.
2. Have your students teach another classroom how to make mandalas. Working co-operatively with another class of students their own age will reinforce the importance of co-operative team skill-building.
3. Create an ongoing corridor display of peaceful news articles. Title it "Peace Wall." Challenge other students in the school to find peaceful articles to add to the "Peace Wall."
4. Make Peacemaker Swap Cards. See directions and format on page 37. Have children extend the activity by making their own cards using the blank card provided.
5. Share the swap cards with younger "book buddies." Have your students encourage their buddies to read about the peacemaker on the swap card. Encourage the children in your class to swap the cards among themselves.
6. Do the Pyramid of Peace (page 9) with the children. Before doing this, review the words that represent the group interdependence. Explain what each one is and have the children rank them from the smallest to the largest. These will be: you, family, neighborhood, community, state, nation, continent, world.

Peace and Nature

In the book *Peace Begins with You* there is this message:

“But all living things are part of one giant web of life.
And — in the end — they all depend on one another.
So when we think about the future,
We must think about living in peace with the land.”

What do these words mean to you? Write your feelings here.

In *The Big Book for Peace* there is the “Law of the Great Peace,” part of which states:

“Roots have spread out from the Tree of Great Peace one to the north, one to the east, one to the south, and one to the west. These are the Great White Roots, and their nature is peace and strength.”

How did the Iroquois Law demonstrate the Iroquois way of living in peace with the land? Write those ways here.

Peace Roles

Often we find ourselves in non-peaceful situations. If we have discussed them in advance, we can sometimes remember alternatives or other ways of doing things. Explain this to the children. Tell them that this is what they are about to do now.

Choose one or more people to do the role play. You may wish to let the children choose their own partners or groups. Discuss who is who, and what each role will include.

First, do a role play with a non-peaceful result. Discuss with the class what has happened. Then have children do the same role-play but with peaceful results. Discuss with the class what occurred the second time.

Ask the whole group which was the most respectful way to handle the situation. Discuss the meaning of respect.

Below are just a few ideas for role plays to get you started. You and your class will certainly have others to add.

Ideas for Role Playing

- At recess, three different people want to play with the one ball.
- At lunch, two people want to sit in the same spot.
- In the classroom, someone takes your pencil.
- At recess, two people continually interrupt your game.
- In the corridor, two people are pushing each other while waiting to go to class.
- In the toilet, you see someone pull all of the remaining paper towels out of the dispenser and place them in the sink.
- You are in line for the drinking tap and a student pushes in front of you.